

June 21, 2005

I am the Director of Technology at Eastern York School District, and I would like to take this opportunity to comment on the Federal E-Rate Program. I have been participating in the program since Year 1, and I appreciate the opportunity for our school to be reimbursed for certain technology-related costs.

#### Paragraph 34

Basing e-rate funding on free and reduced school lunches doesn't seem fair to me. There are many factors that impact a school's budget other than income levels of district residents. For instance, our district has a very minimal amount of industry. The school district is the largest employer in the district. Therefore, the burden of funding falls on our homeowners.

Under the current system, one district could be spending \$10/student/year on technology-related costs, while another could afford to spend \$100/student/year. The district that is able to spend a larger portion of its budget on technology could qualify for much higher e-rate discounts.

#### Paragraph 40

I believe competitive bidding is necessary in some instances. I do think it should be required only above certain amounts. I have found over the years, that through our network of tech directors in our Intermediate Unit and through my association and experience with various vendors that I can obtain educational discounts and negotiate attractive prices with vendors whom I know to be reliable and efficient. The lowest bid does not always give you the most for your money! Quality and reliability need to be assessed along with price. If required to accept the lowest bid, many times we sacrifice workmanship or project completion schedules.

#### Paragraph 43

I definitely would like to see quality standards for service providers. If we are going to be required to accept services from FCC-approved vendors, then those vendors should definitely meet certain standards. As we choose a vendor, we need to feel confident that we will receive quality products and services.